



RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF MARKHAM

**Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre
February 5, 2018**

MINUTES

Attendance:	
<u>Committee</u> Astra Josie Rose, Chair Andrew Yu, Vice Chair Edward Choi (via teleconference) Sujane Kandasamy Maggie Quirt Surinder Razdan Bobbie France	<u>Regrets</u> Osman Akhtar Salman Hasan Aamer Mohammed Sara Siddiqui Rina George-Alexander Faiz Mohyuddin Councillor Logan Kanapathi Regional Councillor Joe Li
<u>Guest</u> Alicia Lauzon, York Region Police	
<u>Staff</u> Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist Josh Machesney, Acting Legislative Coordinator	

The Race Relations Committee convened at 7:15 PM with Astra Josie Rose presiding as Chair.

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Astra Josie Rose welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Changes or Additions to the Agenda

The item "Voting – Municipal Election" was added to the agenda under New Business.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by Surinder Razdan
Seconded by Maggie Quirt

That the minutes of the Markham Race Relations Committee meeting held on January 8th, 2018 be adopted.

CARRIED

4. Markham Human Resources Update

Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist provided an update on the Diversity Action Plan. She advised that the City is moving forward with adopting an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement. Currently, Staff is review the language in existing statements to create an acknowledgement that indicates that the City of Markham has an awareness of the impact on Indigenous cultures. She further advised that Staff is in discussion with Members of Council as to when and where the Indigenous Land Acknowledgement should be said once it is adopted by Council. There was concern among Committee members that some land acknowledgements can be perceived as empty and insincere, and that the acknowledgement adopted by the City should show understanding and awareness.

Cheryl circulated a report on Gender-Based Violence from Status of Women Canada for view by Committee members.

5. Update on Committee Terms of Reference

Cheryl advised the Committee that the Terms of Reference has been drafted, but has not yet been confirmed or approved.

6. Race Relations Business

A) Race Relations Committee Work Plan

Chair Astra Josie Rose shared the following updates:

- Open House - Sara Siddiqui is planning this event entitled “Race Relations – *Living as One Community (Equity and Unity)*. The event has been rescheduled to February, 2018. Chair Astra Josie Rose advised that she spoke with the City’s Corporate Communications & Community Engagement Department to review the necessary paperwork and draft poster for the event. Cheryl circulated a copy of the draft poster.
- Community Awards – Chair Astra Josie Rose reiterated that the purpose of the Community Awards is to provide an opportunity to denounce racism in the City. She advised that the Committee is looking into asking Members of Council to sign an anti-racism pledge. The Committee discussed moving the Community Awards until the end of September due to the high volume of Committee-related events and activities taking place in February and March.

- Many Faces of Markham - It was confirmed that the Many Faces of Markham (MFOM) event will be held on March 24, 2018 at Pierre-Elliott Trudeau High School. She informed the Committee that advertising for the event has commenced, and that students have advertised online and that MFOF is working with teachers to identify advertising opportunities.

7. New Business

A) Social Planning Council of York Region – Community Conversation on Poverty

Chair Astra Josie Rose advised members that the Social Planning Council of York Region hosted an event in Aurora recently regarding a community conversation on poverty, in conjunction with 360 Kids and York Regional Police. Panelists discussed the impacts of poverty in York Region. She further advised that the Social Planning Council has reached out to the Race Relations Committee to help them plan an event in Markham for April. Committee members would only be required to promote the event and book an event location.

There was discussion about the nature of the event, such as concerns that the event could turn into an opportunity for individuals to air grievances, rather than it being a constructive conversation about race relations in Markham. There was also discussion regarding security concerns for the event.

The Committee agreed that they will work with the Social Planning Council to plan the event.

B) Voting – Municipal Elections

Chair Astra Josie Rose suggested that Regional Councillor Armstrong be contacted for further clarification on this initiative.

C) York Regional Police Elimination of Racism Event in April

Chair Astra Josie Rose asked the Committee if they wanted to secure a table for the event. After discussion, the Committee decided to further discuss it at the next meeting.

8. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on Monday, March 5, 2018 in the Ontario Room at 7:00 PM.

9. Adjournment

Moved by Maggie Quirt
Seconded by Bobbie France

That the Race Relations Committee adjourn at 9:11 PM.

CARRIED